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THE HOUSELESS POOR.

WHETHER from inherent imperfections in the framework of human society, or from the unhappy manner in which individuals of the family of man have been constituted, there seems reason to believe, that, in every community—even in those through which the blessings of peace and plenty are most generally diffused—there always will be found *some* unfortunate persons or families, who, for a part of their lives at least, will be in a state of want and misery. It is true that only a very limited amount of that knowledge which is calculated to meliorate their condition and increase their comforts, has as yet been extensively spread among mankind; but, admitting that a great improvement must be the result of its more complete dissemination, experience would still lead us to conclude that its benefits could not penetrate every where, nor be extended to all. All the instructions which the active benevolence of man can provide for his fellows, all the laws which flow from the most enlightened form in which a social compact can exist, seem to be unequal to the task of convincing a luckless class of beings of their true interests, and of leading them into the way of attaining a satisfactory position in life. This class, it is to be regretted, is not inconsiderable in numbers, and, doubtless, additions are often made to it, temporarily at least, from different causes—from physical casualties, for example, to which man, from his natural position, is subject, and ever must be subject.

Such being the case, it comes to be a question among the happier and more fortunate orders of society, what is to be done with this class of outcasts? In this country, and in many others, happily, provision is extensively made for the lame, the dumb, and the blind, and even for the helpless aged and the helpless young. It is not to these we allude, but to a class who cannot be described better than by referring to representations made at a great meeting in the city of Glasgow, held recently for purposes connected with our present subject, and to the results of which meeting it is our principal object to call attention in the present paper. From official returns read on that occasion, it appeared that about fifty individuals, houseless and friendless, habitually received shelter in the various police-offices every night; and that, for want of accommodation, a vast many more applicants could not get admission. Besides, many of the same class, it was proved, were prevented, through the fear or dislike of being shut up in cells, from applying for even the wretched shelter to be procured at these establishments, and usually slept, in consequence, in common stairs, at the side of haystacks or the refuse of stables, and in such like places. The exact numbers who were wont to pass the night in and around the city in such ways, could not be ascertained, but it was proved that as many as from fifty to seventy, of all ages and both sexes, have been seen huddled together overnight, in the neighbourhood of steam-engine boilers, brick-kilns, and other places of a similar kind, where heat could be obtained. Well-authenticated cases were even presented to the same meeting, of mothers, with infants at their breasts, having slept in open stairs in the severest nights of winter.

Such are the unfortunates, the treatment and disposal of whom we now make the subject of consideration to their more favoured brethren. Though error and vice may in most cases have been the near or remote causes of the destitute condition of these homeless wanderers, ought such a system of things, as that depicted in the preceding paragraph, to continue any where? Are such sufferings to remain unrelieved? Independently of the misery of the moment, often,

often must abiding disease have smitten the bones of these poor outcasts; and not unfrequently death itself, lingering if not immediate, must have resulted from exposure to the cold air and chilling damps of night. If mere humanity did not form a strong enough motive for the adoption of such means as might relieve distress of this kind wherever it existed, common prudence even would dictate the prosecution of such a course. Wretched beings, compelled to prowl about the streets of cities and towns, and to lie in outhouses and stairs, with all their better feelings drowned in the cravings of want, are exactly in the condition to be tempted to the commission of outrages of all kinds, whether upon person or property. And, beyond all doubt, much of the crime that is committed in large cities, which are naturally the scene of the evils we allude to in their greatest extent, is perpetrated by persons whom the want of a home has thrown in the way of temptation.

Feelings of humanity, conjoined, it is not disparaging to suppose, with such prudential motives, led the inhabitants of Glasgow, as has been said, to meet on the 16th of March 1838, in order to give their aid to the maintenance of a "Night Asylum for the Houseless," which several gentlemen had taken private steps to originate. The evils described were more clamant in the city of Glasgow, perhaps, than in other places, because its commercial activity and eminence constantly attract to it great numbers of the destitute in search of work. In organising their Asylum, the merchants of the western capital were not without a model to follow, for Liverpool, London, and various other English cities, had enjoyed for a considerable period the advantage of institutions much of the same kind. The Directors took a house (in St Enoch's Wynd), which, from its partially isolated position, admitted of free ventilation both by its sides and ends—a matter of much importance. When all the necessary arrangements were completed in the interior of the building, it presented, and still presents, the following general appearance. In the under floor, a large pan or boiler has been erected, with a fireplace below, for the purpose of cooking porridge, or other simple food; and other culinary conveniences of a simple kind have been added. In another compartment of the same floor, apparatus has been constructed for bathing and washing. This consists, firstly, of several common metallic hand-basins, fixed in a row into a wooden frame at the proper height; secondly, of a foot-bath, or square box for washing the feet and legs; and, thirdly, of a wooden trough, of sufficient size to permit an adult to bathe his whole body in it easily and comfortably. To all these places, of course, water is freely and abundantly supplied, with such contrivances as permit the temperature to be made high or low as required.

The floor immediately above this, or the street one, is divided into several apartments, one of which is the committee-room, and is provided with a desk and other apparatus, for the use of the superintendent and clerk. Another apartment of this street floor is the reception-room, or room for receiving those who apply for admission. Between this room and the committee-room is a large lobby, crossed by a strong wooden rail, in order to separate the inmates from those not yet admitted. The several floors (three or four in number) above these are arranged, generally speaking, in the following way. In every floor are three or four separate rooms, with rows of beds in each, composed of naked, smooth, wooden boards, placed at a slight inclination upon short supports, and provided with a raised and rounded cross portion for a pillow. Each of these beds, thus formed, is furnished with a strong coarse coverlet, of sufficient size to wrap closely

round two persons. This is the sole bed-furniture.* The partitions of these rooms, where new, are of strong plain wood, and the floors are provided with closets, &c. The whole interior of the building, thus subdivided, is pervaded by pipes, which heat it by means of the steam they convey. Thus, at all periods, it can be maintained, without risk, in a condition of perfect comfort as to temperature.

The Asylum, thus arranged, was put under the charge of a superintendent, to be assisted and guided in his duties by a Committee of three, eligible weekly (in succession) out of the list of thirty-six Directors. It is the duty of this Committee to visit the Asylum every evening, and to determine upon the admission of applicants. As it was resolved to make the Asylum as strictly as possible a refuge for those only who really required it, and to make it also, as far as possible, a refuge for *one night* to those who *only required it for one night*, it was determined that the examination of the applicants, as to their homes, parentage, employments, situations, &c., should be strict, and that their answers should be recorded in a book kept for the purpose, with a view to the more complete detection, ultimately, of the general causes of their destitution. Other regulations were moreover adopted, most of which will be alluded to incidentally.

On the 28th of May, the establishment being completed, was opened for the first time. The poor objects for whose relief the institution was set on foot, flocked to the Asylum, and scenes were presented within its walls which might well have wrung harder hearts than those of the benevolent men who had entered there on their voluntary mission of charity. Want, nakedness, filth—in short, destitution in every form—vice, too, sad to say, in many a form—all came before the examiners of the Asylum, sometimes under the guise of age, and at other times of extreme youth, now wearing the shape of man, and now that of woman. During the first five evenings, the numbers of wretched creatures housed in the establishment amounted to four hundred and fifty-two. In the second week, above one hundred were received nightly. All of these were persons who, at their admission, did not know "where to lay their heads." On making this appear to the Committee in their room, each applicant—unless in liquor, or of the class of street unfortunates (for whom other institutions are intended to provide)—is usually sent within, to receive the nightly supper and bed. Such was the miserable nature of the spectacle presented by the generality of the applicants, that, on putting in force the regulation which declares that "every inmate received shall be obliged to bathe or wash him or her self clean, in such a way as the superintendent shall see proper," the man whom the Committee got to assist the male inmates in this operation—although a very poor man himself, and accustomed daily to witness poverty in its ordinary shape—this man, after attempting to go through with his task, came before the Committee again, and declared, with much emotion, that "he could not stand the sight of such wretchedness."† For the assistance of females received into the Asylum,

* The fears of the medical men (several of whom regularly and gratuitously give their valuable services to the Asylum) respecting the accumulation of vermin and spread of cutaneous diseases, formed the principal reason, we believe, for confining the bed-furniture to hard boards and a simple coverlet. A straw mattress, however, or something of the kind, would really seem to be necessary. Perhaps a good pillow might be made by stuffing a bag of sheepskin leather, which could be brushed readily.

† Struck with this sign of a feeling heart, the Committee encouraged the man to go on, and he is now, we believe, one of the two assistants whom it was found necessary to place under the superintendent.

in the same operations of bathing and washing, a matron has been appointed to reside permanently in the house, and to her also falls the business of cooking the food. This is of the plainest order, yet good of its kind; porridge and milk to breakfast and to supper, and bread and milk to dinner—of each full meals.

Though the beds may be hard, and the diet plain, there is a wide difference between such shelter and treatment, and the hungry nakedness and exposure which would otherwise have been the lot of these beings. But it is not the object of the founders of the institution to make it too attractive to the inmates. The Asylum is merely intended to stand for a night between them and houseless want; to shelter and feed them only till they can be placed, or, it may be, replaced, in a situation to procure food and a home for themselves, like other members of society. It is true, that, finding one night to be often insufficient for these ends, the Committee have again and again extended their plan, and taken in the same persons for several nights, where the parties behaved well, and proved that they had sought work in vain; and it is true, moreover, that they have provided simple work in the Asylum for a number of females and children, who also for a time could not seemingly be provided for abroad; but the principle of the institution is ever kept in view, namely, that the Asylum is chiefly a receptacle for those who are, for one night, destitute of a home furnished from their own resources.

In order to render it fully so, the inmates received at night are sent abroad in the morning, that they may endeavour to find situations where they may subsist without charity. If they are not successful, they must return before 8 p. m., if they wish to leave themselves a chance of re-admission. Success, however, often attends their search for work, chiefly through the guidance of the Committee, who well know the state of trade and work. And this brings us to the mention of what, in our eyes, is to be considered as the best and most useful part of this institution. For its benefits are not confined to the provision of shelter and food to the houseless and hungry, nor to the cleansing of their bodies from unhealthy and long existing impurities—which purification, it may be stated in passing, the poor creatures often appear to love as eagerly as if water had been a novel blessing to them; not to these services, is the beneficial range of this institution confined. In the Asylum for the Houseless, the indigent and helpless ever find ready friends and counsellors, who hearken patiently to all their difficulties and wants, and, if possible, relieve and supply them. A noble sight it is, indeed, and one that does honour to humanity, to behold numbers of the first and wealthiest men in one of the first and wealthiest cities in Britain, voluntarily and cheerfully sitting nightly within the walls of this place, listening unweariedly to the stories of these outcasts, and doing all that men can do to relieve their accumulated distresses. If, during the examination that always (as has been stated) takes place on the entrance of inmates, it appears that the person examined is on his or her way to distant friends, and would fain be there, the purses of these generous merchants and their colleagues are never closed; if tools or instruments are wanted, or, in short, the means to work, it is rare that the necessary assistance is withheld; and, in short, counsel and aid are ready in every emergency. Again, within the first four weeks during which this establishment was open, as many as fifteen boys, varying in age from nine to nineteen years, were snatched by the exertions of the Committees from a path that would but too probably have led to continued sorrow and crime, and were sent to the House of Refuge in the same city, where they will be brought up and educated in the most comfortable and excellent manner, and ultimately put to trades by which they may gain a respectable living. Eight girls, the eldest under sixteen years of age, were in like manner saved and provided for in the same period, by being placed at service with those who will treat them well in every way. Leaving out of sight altogether the adults, male and female, who have been temporarily fed and sheltered, or who have been placed in a way of gaining their bread without having recourse to charities, if the institution go on as it is doing, and can only point at the end of the year to a proportionate continuation of such benefits as those conferred on the boys and girls above mentioned, it must be held by all men to have done a great and a good thing for society.

The following statement, with which the Treasurer of the Asylum has been kind enough to furnish us,

will show the immense number of individuals received and relieved by this institution in little more than one month:—

Statement of the number of individuals who have slept in the house since it was opened, 28th May, till 29th June, being 33 nights; also showing the number of meals furnished:—

Number of weeks.	Men.	Boys under 16 years of age, and children.	Women.	Girls under 16 years of age, and children.	Number of breakfasts.	Number of dinners.
1	67	69	106	130	322	...
2	139	106	333	243	1111	229
3	151	85	415	257	1466	359
4	92	59	448	304	1573	634
5	94	64	414	239	1506	548
	543	346	1796	1213	6102	1963

By the returns before us, it appears that the expense of provision for one person per day, including breakfast, dinner, and supper, is exceedingly small, being only twopence and a third of a penny! Even from this very small sum there is a deduction to be made. It was mentioned that the managers of the Asylum, finding no better way of giving temporary employment to some of the women and children whom they received as inmates, took in some work (muslin work, &c.) for them to execute in the house. Since this was tried, about eighty-four persons, on an average, have been retained daily in the house under these circumstances. The proceeds of their work have not yet been received or estimated; but, small as these certainly will prove to be, they will at least make some deduction from the expenses. Indeed, it has been imagined by some, that, in the course of time, an establishment like this would pay itself, independently of all charitable contributions. To do this, however, it must either lose entirely its character of a one-night refuge, or must depend for support upon such extra portions of the gains of a class of workers as are not necessary for their own maintenance. In the first of these cases, the evils against which the Asylum was pointed, would, of course, be left unprovided for, and the other alternative would be productive of a certain degree of unfairness.

Unfortunately, such are the habits of many of the class for whose benefit such an establishment as this is intended, that the attempt to do them good is not without its difficulties. The regulations against smoking, drinking, riotous conduct, and improper language, are occasionally broken, and that to such a degree as to call for the expulsion of the inmates. But as it would be vain to expect a sudden reformation of evil habits in such unfortunate beings, the committees, it is almost needless to observe, temper their severity with a due share of meekness. Another source of trouble to the managing parties, is the proved laziness and indifference to labour of many who profess to be driven there by want of work. It is not unworthy of notice, that this is the most frequent plea for application among the men, while, among the female and larger portion of the inmates, the cause most frequently assigned for destitution is the desertion of husbands. Boys and girls declare themselves to be forsaken by their parents, or turned out by step-fathers. And so on. Ireland is the country from which the greatest number, comparatively, of the applicants, come; and Edinburgh, as might be expected, furnishes a considerable proportion, many persons being of course likely to be attracted from the city of little, to the city of much business. But indeed there are no provinces of the empire from which applicants do not come.

We have now gone briefly over the chief facts relative to this institution, and believe we may safely ask, secure of an assenting answer, if it is not an admirable one? No one, we are sure, can think without pleasure of the great numbers of hungry houseless beings whom it has, during its short existence, fed and sheltered, or of the boys and girls whom it has, in all probability, snatched from ruin and misery. Those who look on the matter more in a politic light, cannot but think with satisfaction of the repression of mendicancy, as well as of the greater security to person and property, resulting from the domiciling of these poor and too easily tempted outcasts. And at how trifling an expense is this maintained! It is true that we have not alluded to the expenses of the household. A rough computation, however, made by the Treasurer of the Asylum, will give us some idea of the cost of the establishment for a year. Salaries of superintendant, matron, and two assistants, with rent, gas, coal, taxes, water, &c., may all be reckoned at L.1 per day, or L.365 a-year. Add to this L.300, which is about the sum, to which, according to the proportion of the weeks past, the living of the inmates for a year would amount to—in all, L.665. From this may be deducted L.165 for the proceeds of occasional work, which will leave L.500 as the annual sum for which this Asylum, so comprehensive in its utility, may be maintained. Forty thousand individuals at least, in one year, must find a home temporarily in it, when they would otherwise have lodged in the cold streets.

Let other cities, both from humane and prudential motives, think of these things. Let them turn to their police records, and note how many unhappy homeless beings fly to these places for the cold shelter they can supply—let them think how many more shiver through the night in corners—and then let them not delay in providing a nightly refuge for the houseless. In Lon-

don, Manchester, and Liverpool, as has been mentioned, establishments of this nature have for some years been in existence, and we believe in every instance with the most beneficial results, both as regards the diminution of the sum of human misery, and the preservation of the public peace.

POPULAR SKETCHES IN NATURAL HISTORY. POUCHED ANIMALS.

If the term *oddy* could with propriety be applied to any department of nature, there is none to which it could be more properly applied than to the order of quadrupeds named *Marsupialia*, or Pouched Animals, from the female being provided with a *marsupium*, or pouch, in which she for some time keeps her young. In the general character of these creatures, an approach is made, on the one hand, to the gnawing tribes (*Rodentia*), as rats, squirrels, hares, and beavers, and on the other to the butchering tribes (*Carnaria*), of which the fox, wolf, dog, and cat, are familiar specimens. But the chief peculiarity of structure is the *pouch*, from which the order takes its name—a fold or flap of skin on the belly of the females, in which it is certain that the young are fostered for a considerable time before they may be described as fit to enter the living and breathing world, and where they are afterwards occasionally sheltered, apparently on the same considerations which induce the hen to take her chicks under her wing.

The *Marsupialia* are not native to any part of Europe. The principal families of the order are the opossums of North America, and the kangaroos of Australia. In the latter country there are upwards of forty species, to the almost total exclusion of any other order of quadrupeds. Some of the islands of the Indian archipelago, at no great distance from Australia, form the only other part of the world in which pouched animals are found.

Very singular as this order of creatures is, nothing is yet known satisfactorily of its mode of production. Numerous investigations have been made into the subject by naturalists, and the result is two conflicting opinions. According to one party, the young of the *marsupialia*, for instance young opossums, after being to a certain extent matured as embryos in the usual way, are advanced into the pouch, where they become attached to the teats of the mother, to which they adhere, until, having reached that degree of maturity in which other animals are usually born, they drop off into the pouch, and nestle there till able to provide for themselves. The other party maintain that the young grow from the very first from the nipples; but as to how that can be, consistently with other circumstances, they are at a loss to explain. With the view of settling a very difficult fact in natural history, M. d'Abeville, a French gentleman, in the year 1783, determined to seize and examine periodically a female opossum which he had domesticated along with its companion. For several days the animal kept her nest or retreat, the pouch evidently increasing in dimensions. "On the fifteenth day, a finger was introduced into the pouch, and a round body about the size of a pea was plainly felt at the bottom. This examination was made with difficulty, on account of the impudence of the mother, who had before this been always mild and tranquil. On the seventeenth, she permitted a further examination, and M. d'Abeville discovered two bodies about the size of a pea. There was, however, a great number of these young ones. On the twenty-fifth day, they moved very perceptibly, yielding to the touch: on the fortieth, the pouch was sufficiently open for them to be plainly distinguished; and on the sixtieth, when the mother lay down, they were seen hanging to the teats, some outside the pouch, some inside. The nipple is about two-eighths of an inch in length; but it soon dries up, and at last drops off."—*Cuvier's Animal Kingdom*, vol. iii. p. 6. Notwithstanding this and similar investigations, the question, of how the embryo animal is fastened to, or first developed on, the teat, remains a mystery, which can never be solved by theorising; and we must remain in ignorance of the circumstance, till the experiment be fairly made, of killing and dissecting some dozen or two of female opossums at different stages of gestation.

With respect to the nature and appearance of the pouch itself, it is external to the body, and of the same substance of skin as the other exterior parts of the animal. Its shape and size, however, are not in all cases the same. In some creatures the pouch is imperfectly developed by longitudinal wrinkles of skin, meeting in some respects like the two flaps of a waistcoat, while in others the skin forms ample folds round a central part of the abdomen, on which are the teats. In some species there is a bone, found in no other animal, to which nature has assigned the particular function of opening and shutting the pouch, and is hence styled in anatomy *janitor marsupii*. In certain species, the fore-legs and paws possess some of the characteristics of arms and hands, never having less than four fingers, with the rudiments of a thumb, whereas the fore-paws of kangaroos are generally called hands by naturalists; they serve little or no purpose in locomotion, which is performed almost exclusively by the aid of two powerful hind-legs and a tail. In the opossum species the hind-paws bear most resemblance to hands, a thumb being opposed to four

ingers; and with these and their monkey-like tail, they are able to climb up trees with particular dexterity, of which qualification the reader has no doubt a mirthful recollection in Mathews's famous song—

“Possum up a gum tree!”

To free an opossum is reckoned a very convenient and amusing preliminary to shooting him, by a hunter in the backwoods.

Mr P. Cunningham, in his work “Two Years in New South Wales,” thus speaks of the larger kind of kangaroos of that country:—“The kangaroos make no use of their short fore-legs, except in grazing, when they rise upon them and their tail, bring their hind-legs forward, and go nibbling upon all fours, pulling up occasionally some favourite plant with their fore-paw, and sitting up bold and erect upon their houghs and tail, while they slowly bite and nibble it, shifting it from paw to paw like a boy protracting his repast on a juicy apple. When chased, they hop upon their hind-legs, bounding onwards at a most amazing rate, the tail wagging up and down as they leap, and serving them for a balance. They will bound over gullies, and down declivities, the distance of thirty yards, and fly right over the tops of low brushwood, so that in such places dogs stand very little chance with them, but, in a clear open country, soon tire them out. The dogs seize them generally by the hip, and throw them over; then fasten upon their throats, and finish them. But few dogs will attack a large kangaroo singly, some of the two hundred weight size often hopping off with three or four assailants hanging about them; and I was informed of one that actually carried a man to some distance. When a dog gets up close to a large kangaroo, it will often sit up on its tail and haunches, and fight the dog, turning adroitly round and round (so as always to face him), and pushing him off with the fore-paws: or it will seize and hug him like a bear, ripping him up with the long sharp claw on its powerful hind-leg. They are constantly, indeed, cutting and often killing dogs with this terrible weapon, which will tear out the bowels at a single kick; and a large kangaroo is on this account very dangerous even for a man to approach, when set at bay. The kangaroo hunters immediately hamstring them when thrown, to prevent injury to themselves or the dogs; while the black natives give them a heavy blow over the loins with their *waddie*, which completely paralyses their hind-legs, as all the large nerves supplying these parts pass out there.

It is amusing to see the young kangaroo pop its head out of the pouch, when the mother is grazing, and nibble too at the tender herbage which she is passing over. When hard hunted, the mother will stop suddenly, thrust her fore-paws into her pouch, drag out the young one and throw it away, that she may hop lighter along. They are always very hard pressed, however, before they thus sacrifice the life of their offspring, to save their own; and it is piteous to see the tender sympathetic looks they will sometimes cast back at the poor little helpless creatures they have been forced to desert.”

The opossum (*Didelphis Virginiana*), which is found in great numbers in the interior of the United States, is an animal about the size of the cat, with a long prehensile tail, and is perfectly harmless in its nature, except in so far as it has a predilection for catching small feathered prey for its subsistence. It has twelve or thirteen young at a time; a number which the pouch is unable to contain when they are a few weeks advanced in an independent condition; but the mother is unceasing in her regards for her offspring, and rather than leave them behind when hunted, will place them on her back, and carry them off in safety.

Nature has given a low degree of intelligence to the opossum, and though its mouth is large and well furnished with teeth, the animal has not the desire to render it a weapon of defence against the assaults of its enemies. Like other innocent creatures, it is apt to be rather shabbily used by mankind. Nature, however, has not left it without the endowment of a faculty by which it can escape from persecution. This faculty is an exquisite degree of cunning or simulation. When pursued and overtaken, it pretends to be dead, and lies so stiff and motionless, that it will deceive any one not up to its tricks. One writer asserts that he has seen an opossum in this state of sham death actually submit to be scorched with a red-hot iron without showing any signs of life, and yet, when no one was looking at it, and when it thought all its persecutors were gone, it scrambled off with all the expedition in its power.

Audubon, in his usual kindly manner, speaks of this ingenious trickiness of the opossum, in one of his papers in the Ornithological Biography. “Its movements (says he) are usually rather slow, and as it walks or ambles along, its curious prehensile tail is carried just above the ground, its rounded ears are directed forward, and at almost every step its pointed nose is applied to the objects beneath it, in order to discover what sort of creatures may have crossed its path. Methinks I see one at this moment slowly and cautiously trudging over the melting snows by the side of an unfrequented pond, nosing as it goes for the fare its ravenous appetite prefers. Now it has come upon the fresh track of a grouse or hare, and it raises its snout and snuffs the keen air. At length it has decided on its course, and it speeds onward at the rate of a man's ordinary walk. It stops, and seems at a loss in what direction to go, for the object of its pursuit has either

taken a considerable leap, or has cut backwards before the opossum entered its track. It raises itself up, stands for a while on its hind-feet, looks around, snuffs the air again, and then proceeds; but now, at the foot of a noble tree, it comes to a full stand. It walks round the base of the huge trunk, over the snow-covered roots, and among them finds an aperture, which it at once enters. Several minutes elapse, when it re-appears, dragging along a squirrel already deprived of life, with which in its mouth it begins to ascend the tree. Slowly it climbs. The first fork does not seem to suit it, for perhaps it thinks it might there be too openly exposed to the view of some wily foe, and so it proceeds, until it gains a cluster of branches intertwined with grape-vines, and there composing itself, it twists its tail round one of the twigs, and with its sharp teeth demolishes the unlucky squirrel, which it holds all the while with its fore-paws.

But, suppose the farmer has surprised an opossum in the act of killing one of his best fowls. His angry feelings urge him to kick the poor beast, which, conscious of its inability to resist, rolls off like a ball. The more the farmer rages, the more reluctant is the animal to manifest resentment; at last there it lies, not dead, but exhausted, its jaws open, its tongue extended, its eye dimmed; and there it would lie until the bottle-fly should come to deposit its eggs, did not its tormentor at length walk off. “Surely,” says he to himself, “the beast must be dead.” But no, reader, it is only “possuming,” and no sooner has its enemy withdrawn, than it gradually gets on its legs, and once more makes for the woods.

Once, while descending the Mississippi, in a sluggish flat-bottomed boat, expressly for the purpose of studying those objects of nature more nearly connected with my favourite pursuits, I chanced to meet with two well-grown opossums, and brought them alive to the ‘ark.’ The poor things were placed on the roof or deck, and were immediately assailed by the crew, when, following their natural instinct, they lay as if quite dead. An experiment was suggested, and both were thrown overboard. On striking the water, and for a few moments after, neither evinced the least disposition to move; but, finding their situation desperate, they began to swim towards our uncouth rudder, which was formed of a long slender tree, extending from the middle of the boat thirty feet beyond its stern. They both got upon it, were taken up, and afterwards let loose in their native woods.”

Some other animals, for instance the Guinea-pig, resort to a similar trick of pretending to be dead when assaulted violently, as if instinctively aware that the feline or cat-like beasts of prey were comparatively regardless of dead game.

STORY OF NEWCASTLE-UPON-TYNE.

ONE day, a good many years ago, a young woman knocked at the door of a little cottage in the suburbs of the town of Newcastle-upon-Tyne. The knock was immediately responded to by the opening of the door from within. An aged woman, neatly dressed, and who had evidently risen from her wheel, was the sole inmate of the little cot. “Bless your heart, girl,” said the dame, as she entered with her visitor, and sat down to the wheel again; “there must surely be something particular about you to-day, for you did not use to knock.” “I was afraid some one might be with you, mother,” said the girl, who had taken a seat opposite to the spinner. “And though a neighbour had been here,” replied the dame, “this surely wouldn't have frightened you away. But the truth is, you have got something to say to me, Catherine,” continued the speaker kindly; “out with it, my dear, and depend upon the best counsel that old Hannah can give.” The young woman blushed, and did not immediately speak. “Has William Hutton asked you to be his wife, Catherine?” said the dame, who easily and rightly anticipated the matter that was in the thoughts of her youthful visitor. “He has, mother,” was the reply. The old woman began to brr earnestly at the wheel. “Well, my dear,” said she, after a short pause, “is not this but what you have long expected—ay, and wished? He has your heart; and so, I suppose, it needs no witch to tell what will be the end on't.”

This might be all very true, but there was something upon Catherine's mind which struggled to be out, and out it came. “Dear Hannah,” said she, seating herself close by the dame, and taking hold of her hand, “you have been a kind friend—a parent—to me, since my own poor mother died, and I have no one else to look to for advice but yourself. I have not given William an answer, and would not till I had spoken to you; especially as something—as you once said—” “What did I say, Catherine?” interrupted the old woman; “nothing against the man you love, surely. He is, from all that I have seen and heard, kind-hearted, industrious, and every way well behaved.” “Yes, Hannah,” replied the young woman; “but you once said, after I had brought him once or twice to see you, that you did not like those—those sorts of low fits that sometimes fall upon him even in company. I have often noticed them since, Hannah,” continued Catherine with a sigh. “Plague on my old thoughtless tongue for saying any such thing to vex you, my dear child. Heed not so careless a speech, Catherine. He was a soldier, you know, a good many years ago—before he was twenty—and fought for his country. He may have seen sights then, that make him grave

to think upon, without the least cause for blaming himself. But, whatever it may be, I meant not, Catherine, that you should take such a passing word to heart. If he has some little cares, you will easily soothe them and make him happy.”

As the worthy dame spoke, her visitor's brow gradually cleared, and, after some further conversation, Catherine left the cottage, lightened at heart with the thought that her old friend approved of her following the course to which her inclinations led her. Catherine Smith was indeed well entitled to pay respect to the counsels of Hannah. The latter had never been married, and had spent the greater part of her life in the service of a wealthy family at Morpeth. When she was there, the widowed mother of Catherine had died in Newcastle, and on learning of the circumstance, Hannah, though a friend merely, and no relation, had sent for the orphan girl, then about ten years of age, and had taken care of her till she grew fit to maintain herself by service. On finding herself unable to continue a working life longer, Hannah had retired to Newcastle, her native place, where she lived in humble comfort on the earnings of her long career of servitude. Catherine came back with her to Newcastle, and immediately entered into service there. Hannah and Catherine had been two years in these respective situations, when the dialogue which has been recorded took place.

On the succeeding expiry of her term of service, Catherine was married to the young man whose name has been stated as being William Hutton. He was a joiner to trade, and bore, as Hannah had said, an excellent character. The first visit paid by the new married pair was to the cottage of the old woman, who gazed on them with a truly maternal pride, thinking she had never seen so handsome a couple. The few years spent by Hutton in the army had given to his naturally good figure an erect manliness, which looked as well in one of his sex, as the slight, graceful figure, and fair, ingenuous countenance of Catherine, was calculated to adorn one of womankind. Something of this kind, at least, was in the thoughts of old Hannah when Catherine and her husband visited the dame's little dwelling.

Many a future visit was paid by the same parties to Hannah, and on each successive occasion the old woman looked narrowly, though as unobtrusively as possible, into the state of the young wife's feelings—with a motherly anxiety to know if she was happy. For, though Hannah—seeing Catherine's affections to be deeply engaged—had made light of her own early remarks upon the strange and most unpleasant gloom occasionally if not frequently observable in the look and manner of William Hutton, the old woman had never been able to rid her own mind altogether of misgivings upon the subject. For many months after Catherine's marriage, however, Hannah could discover nothing but open, unalloyed happiness in the air and conversation of the youthful wife. But at length Hannah's anxious eye did perceive something like a change. Catherine seemed sometimes to fall, when visiting the cottage, into fits of abstraction not unlike those which had been observed in her husband. The aged dame felt greatly distressed at the thought of her dear Catherine being unhappy, but for a long time held her peace upon the subject, trusting that the cloud might be a temporary one, and would disappear.

It was not so, unfortunately. Though, in her manner to each other when together, nothing but the most cordial affection was observable, Catherine, when she came alone to see Hannah, always seemed a prey to some uneasiness, which all her efforts could not conceal from her old friend. Even when she became for the first time a mother, and, with all the beautiful pride of a young mother's love, presented her babe to Hannah, the latter could see signs of a secret grief imprinted on Catherine's brow. Hoping by her counsels to bring relief, Hannah at last took an opportunity to tell the young wife what she had observed, and besought her confidence. At first, Catherine stammered forth a hurried assurance that she was perfectly happy, and, in a few seconds, belied her words by bursting into tears, and owning that she was very unhappy. “But I cannot, Hannah,” she exclaimed, “I cannot tell the cause—not even to you!” “Don't say so, my poor Catherine,” replied Hannah; “it is not curiosity that bids me interfere.” “Oh no! Hannah,” replied the young wife, “I know you speak from love to me!” “Well, then,” continued the dame, “open your heart to me. Age is a good adviser.” Catherine was silent. “Is your husband harsh?” asked Hannah. “No, no,” cried the wife; “man could not be kinder to woman than he is to me.” “Perhaps he indulges in drink—in private—” “Hannah, you mistake altogether,” was Catherine's reply; “my husband is as free from all such faults as ever man was.” “My dear child,” said the old woman, almost smiling as the idea entered her head, “you are not suspicious—not jealous—” “I have never had a moment's cause, Hannah,” answered Catherine. “No, my griefs are not of that nature. He is one of the best and dearest of husbands.” Old Hannah was puzzled by these replies, as much as she was distressed by the now open avowal of Catherine's having some hidden cause of sorrow; but seeing that her young friend could not make up her mind to a disclosure at the time, the aged dame gave up her inquiries, and told Catherine to think seriously of the propriety of confiding all to her.

Hannah conceived that, on mature consideration,

Catherine would come to the resolution of seeking counsel at the cottage. And she was not wrong. In a few days after their late conversation, the young wife came to visit Hannah again, and after a little absent and embarrassed talk, entered on the subject which was uppermost in the minds of both. "Hannah," said Catherine, "I fear you can serve me nothing—I fear no living being can serve me. Oh, Hannah! good as my husband appears to be—good as he is—there is some dreadful weight pressing upon his mind, which destroys his peace—and mine too. Alas! the gloomy fits which you as well as I noticed in him, are not, I fear, without cause." Catherine wept in silence for a minute, and continued—"All that I know of this cause, arises from his expressions—his dreadful expressions—while he is sleeping by my side. Hannah! he speaks, in broken language, of *murder*—of having committed a murder! He mutters about the 'streaming blood' that his hand drew from the 'innocent victim.' Alas! I have heard enough to tell me that he speaks of a *young woman*. Oh, Hannah! perhaps a woman deceived and killed by him!" As Catherine said this, she shuddered, and buried her face in that of the babe which she carried in her arms.

Hannah was shocked to hear of this, but her good sense led her at once to suggest, for the comfort of the poor wife, that it was perfectly possible for her husband to imagine himself a murderer in his sleep, and speak of it, without the slightest reality in the whole affair. "Ah, Hannah," said Catherine sadly, "these dreadful sayings are not the result of one nightmare slumber. They occur often—too often. Besides, when I first heard him mutter in his sleep of these horrible things, I mentioned the matter to him in the morning at our breakfast, and laughed at it; but he grew much agitated; and telling me to pay no attention to such things, 'as he sometimes talked nonsense, he knew, in his sleep,' he rose and went away, leaving his meal unfinished—indeed, scarcely touched. I am sure he does not know how often he speaks in his sleep, for I have never mentioned the subject again—though my rest is destroyed by it. And then his fits of sadness at ordinary moments! Hannah, Hannah! there is some mystery—some terrible mystery under it! Yet," continued the poor young wife, "he is so good—so kind—so dutiful to God and to man! He has too much tenderness and feeling to harm a fly! Hannah, what am I to think or do, for I am wretched at present!"

It was long ere the old dame replied to this question. She mused deeply on what had been told to her, and in the end said to Catherine, "My poor child, I cannot believe that William is guilty of what these circumstances lay seemingly to his door. But if the worst be true, it is better for you to know it, than to be in this killing suspense for ever. Go and gain his confidence, Catherine; tell him all that has come to your ear, and say that you do so by my advice." Hannah continued to use persuasions of the same kind for some time longer, and at length sent Catherine home, firmly resolved to follow the counsel given to her.

On the following day, Catherine once more presented herself at the abode of Hannah, and, as soon as she had entered, exclaimed, "Dear mother, I have told him all! He will be here soon to explain every thing to us both." The old woman did not exactly comprehend this. "Has he not," said she, "given an explanation, then, to you?" "No, Hannah," said Catherine; "but, oh! he is not guilty. When I had spoken to him as you desired me, he was silent for a long time, and he then took me in his arms, Hannah, and kissed me, saying, 'My darling Catherine, I ought to have confided in you long before. I have been unfortunate, but not guilty. Go to kind Hannah's, and I will soon follow you, and set your mind at ease—as far as it can be done. Had I known how much you have been suffering, I would have done this long before.' These were his words, Hannah. Oh, he may be unfortunate, but not guilty."

Hannah and Catherine said little more to each other until the husband of the latter came to the cottage. William sat down gravely by the side of his wife, and after kindly inquiring for the old woman, at once commenced to tell his story. "The reason of the unhappy exclamations in sleep (said he), which have weighed so much upon your mind, my dear Catherine, may be very soon told. They arose from a circumstance which has much embittered my own peace, but which, I hope, is to be regarded as a sad calamity, rather than a crime. When I entered the army, which I did at the age of nineteen, the recruiting party to which I attached myself was sent to Scotland, where we remained for but a few months, being ordered again to England, in order to be transported to the continent. One unhappy morning, as we were passing out of a town where we had rested on our march southwards, my companions and I chanced to see a girl, apparently about fifteen years of age, washing clothes in a tub. Being then the most light-hearted among the light-hearted, I took up a large stone with the intention of splashing the water against the girl. She stooped hastily, and, shocking to tell, when I threw the stone, it struck her on the head, and she fell to the ground, with, I fear, her skull fractured. Stupified by what I had done, I stood gazing on the stream of blood rushing from my poor victim's head, when my companions, observing that no one had seen us (for it was then early in the morning), hurried me off. We were not pursued, and were in a few weeks on the continent; but the image of that bleeding girl

followed me every where; and since I came home, I have never dared to inquire into the result, lest suspicion should be excited, and I should suffer for murder! For I fear, from the dreadful nature of the blow, that the death of that poor creature lies at my door!"

While Hutton was relating this story, he had turned his eyes to the window; but what was his astonishment, as he was concluding, to hear old Hannah cry aloud, "Thank God!" while his wife burst into a hysterical passion of tears and smiles, and threw herself into his arms. "My dear husband!" cried she, as soon as her voice found utterance, "that town was Morpeth?" "It was," said he. "Dear William," the wife then cried, "I am that girl!" "You, Catherine!" cried the amazed and enraptured husband, as he pressed her to his breast. "Yes," said old Hannah, from whose eyes tears of joy were fast dropping, "the girl whom you unfortunately struck was she who is now the wife of your bosom; but your fears had magnified the blow. Catherine was found by myself soon after the accident, and though she lost a little blood, and was stunned for a time, she soon got round again. Praise be heaven for bringing about this blessed explanation!" "Amen," cried Catherine and her husband.

Peace and happiness, as much as usually falls to the happiest of mortals, were the lot of Catherine and her husband from this time forward, their great source of inquietude being thus taken away. The wife even loved her husband the more, from the discovery that the circumstances which had caused her distress were but a proof of his extreme tenderness of heart and conscience, and William was attached the more strongly to Catherine, after finding her to be the person whom he had unwittingly injured. A new tie, as it were, had been formed between them. Strange as this history may appear, it is true.

LATEWAKE ENTERTAINMENTS.

IDLE and extravagant as some of our funeral customs continue to be, they bear no comparison with what prevailed some forty or fifty years ago; even within the last twenty years, a very great improvement has taken place in this branch of our domestic economy. The most remarkable thing about the old Scotch funeral customs, was the high degree of joviality which prevailed. The interval of a few days which elapsed between the death and burial of an individual, was little else than a period of continual feasting, and the house bore more resemblance to a tavern in the height of business, than to a dwelling of sorrow and lamentation.

We are old enough to remember some of these remarkable ongoing, and their gradual subsidence into comparative decency and sobriety. First in the series of entertainments, came the "Dressing of the Corpse," which was attended by all the female acquaintances of the family, and also some of the more intimate male friends at a later period of the evening. In every town there was at least one old lady who followed the profession of making ceremonies, and she, of course, on occasions of this nature, figured as mistress of the ceremonies. The body of the defunct, under her directions, was now seen laid out in a sort of state, with the pure white habiliments spreading in all their amplitude around the sides of the bed, and hanging from the top in tastefully disposed festoons.

Next in the order of ceremonies was the "Chesting," or laying of the body of the deceased in the coffin; and this generally took place, in the midst of a great number of friends, on the evening previous to the day appointed for the funeral. The chesting, being an assemblage rather more of a private than of a public nature, was immediately followed by the "Latewake," a lengthy entertainment, or series of entertainments, at which perhaps some hundreds of persons attended by invitation. The latewake was in fact a regular carousal, lasting the greater part of the night. Inasmuch as some prim old female fashioner had superintended the ceremony of laying out the corpse, so now the undertaker, who was some dounce old carpenter, reputed for his skill in coffin-making and grace-saying, acted as master of the revels. If the number of the acquaintances of the family was considerable, the duties of this most respectable functionary were by no means trifling. In order to serve all equally, so many guests were invited at one hour, and so many at another, by which there was a fresh company every hour, and to each the same attentions were shown. Yet it rarely happened that the whole of each company was cleared out; there was always a remnant, composed of a few "drouthy neebours," who felt themselves particularly comfortable both in respect of drink and conversation, so that a leavening of the same individuals may be said to have been kept up from first to last through the entire latewake. Now, to meet such contingencies as this, and keeping in view that each new service required a new benediction, it was of importance that the undertaker should be a man possessed of a considerable number of graces: the same over and over again would have been intolerable to the remnant of drouthy neebours aforesaid. Well do we remember old laird Grieve, a worthy famous alike for his coffins, his jests, and his latewake graces; and we dressey many of our readers whose remembrance carries them back to the period to which we refer, must have similar recollections of the class of undertakers of which the laird was a sample.

At these latewakes, which were universal through the country, an immense deal of viands was consumed. The staple articles of entertainment were generally whisky, beer, cheese, bread, and tobacco—producing oceans of punch, mountains of bread and cheese, and clouds of smoke. To show to what wasteful extravagance these carousals were sometimes carried, we need only mention, that, at the latewake and other funeral entertainments of the great-grandfather of the present writer—a person moving in a respectable but comparatively humble rank of life, who died between sixty and seventy years since—sixteen stones of cheese and a stone of tobacco, with a number of gallons of whisky and beer, were consumed. A game, of which we do not know the exact nature, but which was called *Dishyloof*, was played, and the feast continued for upwards of two days. On other occasions, we have heard, the young people of both sexes would engage in games of forfeits, which raised the merry-making to a pitch still more removed from the decorum which seems to a rational mind proper to the occasion. Sometimes the house would be so full, that parties were fain to sit on the front of the very bed containing the corpse.

The following strange story connected with a latewake was related in the Scots Magazine, a few years before it terminated:—"Mr William Craighead, author of a popular system of arithmetic, was parish schoolmaster of Monifieth, situate upon the estuary of the Tay, about six miles east from Dundee. It would appear that Mr Craighead was then a young man, fond of a frolic, without being very scrupulous about the means, or calculating the consequences. There was a latewake in the neighbourhood, attended by a number of his acquaintance, according to the custom of the times; Craighead procured a confederate, with whom he concerted a plan to draw the watchers from the house, or at least from the room where the corpse lay. Having succeeded in this, he dexterously removed the dead body to an outer house, while his companion occupied the place of the corpse in the bed where it had lain. It was agreed upon between the confederates, that when the company was reassembled, Craighead was to join them, and at a concerted signal the impostor was to rise shrouded like the dead man, while the two were to enjoy the terror and alarm of their companions. Mr C. came in, and after being some time seated, the signal was made, but met no attention—he was rather surprised: it was repeated, and still neglected. Mr Craighead in his turn now became alarmed, for he conceived it impossible that his companion could have fallen asleep in that situation—his uneasiness became insupportable—he went to the bed—and found his companion lifeless! Mr Craighead's feelings (as may well be imagined) now entirely overpowered him, and the dreadful fact was disclosed; his agitation was extreme, and it was far from being alleviated when every attempt to restore animation to the thoughtless young man proved abortive. As soon as their confusion would permit, an inquiry was made after the original corpse: Mr Craighead and another went to fetch it, but—it was not to be found! The alarm and consternation of the company was now redoubled; that of Mr Craighead was little short of distraction. Daylight came without relieving his agitation; no trace of the corpse could be discovered, and Mr Craighead was accused as the *primum mobile* of all that had happened: he was incapable of sleeping, and wandered several days and nights in search of the body, which was at last discovered in the parish of Tealing, deposited in a field about six miles distant from the place from whence it was removed. It is related, that this extraordinary affair had a strong and lasting effect upon Mr Craighead's mind and conduct; that he immediately became serious and thoughtful, and ever after conducted himself with great prudence and sobriety."

After all, the latewake did not conclude the entertainments by which our ancestors thought it proper to signalise the deaths of their friends. There was still the entertainment at the funeral itself, which, at the very least, usually consisted of several rounds of cake and wine or whisky, and was sometimes protracted till the company had become not very fit to move decorously to the burial-place. The case alluded to in Humphry Clinker, of a company who were so far confused by their potations as to go half way to the churchyard before discovering that they had left the corpse behind, was, we have heard, a real one: the circumstance occurred at the funeral of Mrs Hume of Billy, in Berwickshire—an unfortunate lady who, about a century ago, was murdered by her man-servant. To this day, in the Highlands of Scotland, the entertainments at funerals are of an elaborate character. The attendants, usually coming from great distances, actually require more refreshment than those who attend funerals in town; and this necessity easily leads to over-indulgence. Whisky is always distributed in abundance, with bread, cheese, and perhaps still more substantial viands; and it is not to be wondered at that, finding such provisions before them after a long walk or ride, the generality of those present manifest some disposition to delay the march to the churchyard. It may give some idea of the complicated nature of a Highland funeral, that when an Argyllshire gentwoman of fortune died three or four years ago in Edinburgh, and was carried to her native parish for interment, the entire bill of the man of legal business who managed the affair, amounted to four hundred and fifty pounds.

The funeral being finished, and the deceased quietly or inquietly inurned, there was still something more to be done. The company had to return to the *Dredgy*, an entertainment somewhat similar to the late wake, and probably taking its rise in some ceremony of ancient days, in which *dirges* were sung, as no other feasible explanation of the name can be given. The dredgy being concluded, the poor family was at length left to feel for the first time, in solitude and leisure, the severity of the loss with which they had been visited, and to seek for the appropriate consolations.

EMIGRATION TO SOUTH AUSTRALIA.

SOUTH AUSTRALIA is a large district of country lying on the southern shore of the Australian continent, between the Swan River settlement or Western Australia on the west, and New South Wales on the east. It is contained within about the 26th and 36th degrees of south latitude, and forms a territory of nearly 300,000 square miles, or 192,000,000 acres, being nearly double the dimensions of the British Isles. It may be readily recognised on the map of Australia, by being penetrated from the sea by Spenser's Gulf, and Gulf St Vincent, at the entrance to which lies Kangaroo Island. At the distance of five degrees of longitude to the east, is situated Port Philip, a recently opened settlement of New South Wales, and with which an intercourse is now carried on with the opposite coast of Van Dieman's Land. South Australia is thus placed at a centre point between older British settlements, and is therefore within reach of every luxury and social advantage which these may be expected to offer.

Having already described the appearance and natural products of New South Wales, we are spared any lengthened account of the present territory, which is in many respects the same. The following paper on the subject, written by Mr John Morphett, and laid before Parliament by the Commissioners under the South Australian act, will sufficiently describe the capabilities of the country.

"The country, from Cape Jervis upwards [eastern side of Gulf St Vincent], is very picturesque, and generally well timbered, but in the disposition of the trees, more like an English park than what we could have imagined to be the character of untrodden wilds; it is, therefore, well suited for depasturing sheep, and in many places, under present circumstances, quite open enough for the plough. A range of hills, with valleys opening through to the back, runs down it at an average distance of ten or twelve miles. Most of these hills are good soil to the top, and all would furnish excellent feed during the winter. The country between these and the sea is very diversified; in some places undulating, in others level, with plains both open and elegantly wooded. There are many streams running into the sea, with very deep channels. These in summer are low, and a few of them dry; but the entire range of hills in which these have their sources, abounds in gullies and ravines, affording the greatest facilities for damming, whereby an immense quantity of water might be retained from the winter rains. This is important, as a system of irrigation might be applied here with great advantage. The soil is generally excellent—a fine rich mould, with a substratum of clay."

Adelaide, the capital town of the colony, is agreeably situated near the eastern shore of Gulf St Vincent, in latitude 34 degrees 57 minutes south. Since the settlement of the town a year or two ago, it has gained considerable accessions of population by the immigration of respectable families from Britain. "The capital (continues Mr Morphett) is situated on gently rising ground on both banks of a pretty stream, commanding a view of an extensive plain reaching down to the sea, over which the south-west breezes blow nine months of the twelve, with invigorating freshness. At the back is a beautifully wooded country, which extends for about six miles, to the base of the first range of hills, which are capped by a high wooded one, called Sturt Mount. Lofty, 2400 feet above the level of the sea. To the left, the hills gently curve round and trend down to the coast at about nine miles from the town, inclosing a plain country, in some places open, in others wooded, having a few small streams and fresh-water lakes. To the right, the hills run in a northerly and easterly direction, continuing for thirty or forty miles, where they appear to sink into a plain. The country along their base is well timbered; nearer the coast it is open and level.

The climate is decidedly fine; the heat latterly has been very great, but tempered by a pleasant sea breeze, which blows regularly through the summer, setting in about nine o'clock in the morning, and continuing till sunset. There has been scarcely a case of illness since we landed, notwithstanding the privation and hardships attendant upon the first settlement of a country, and we think nothing of sleeping in the open air. The anticipations we formed in England respecting the fall of rain on this coast have been realised: whilst at Sydney they have been very nearly without a drop of rain for the last five or six months, we have had an abundance. It is gratifying to find that the country and climate are admirably adapted to sheep breeding, since wool is the staple commodity of Australia.

I have before alluded to the advantages to be expected from a communication with the Murray, and I now refer to it again, as being a point of great importance. There are extensive and rich plains to the

westward of the Warragony Mountains, in which several hundred thousand sheep are depastured. The produce of these flocks has to be carried over these mountains at an immense expense, in order to be shipped at Sydney. The yearly increasing flocks of the settlers of New South Wales will compel fresh explorations to the westward, and the formation of stock settlements still farther from the point of embarkation; in addition to which, we may confidently expect the occupancy of that extensive and beautiful tract of country still nearer to us, discovered by Major Mitchell, and called Australia Felix. Now, I think our position will reasonably justify us in calculating upon the whole of its export, as well as that of all the country on the banks of the Murray. I think it would be cheaper to send the wool raised on the plains this side of the chain of mountains mentioned above, down the Murray in boats, and overland from that river to our port. If we have the export, we shall certainly secure the import trade; and thus, as carriers for another settlement, obtain wealth and importance quite independent of what will arise from the capabilities of our own territory."

The colonisation of South Australia (more particularly described in our 242d number) proceeds upon a plan of a peculiar, and, as is believed, much improved nature. The colony is erected by an act of Parliament, which confers upon a board of Commissioners in London, the right of selling the lands, and superintending all matters connected with emigration. The board is assisted by a commissioner resident in the colony, and the local government of the province is placed in the hands of a governor appointed by the crown. There are also, in the colony, a legislative council, a supreme court of law, and other functionaries of government. It is settled by the act of Parliament that no convicts shall ever be transported to the colony, or allowed to enter it. The leading error of granting large tracts of land to parties who have no means of cultivating them, is also to be avoided, and an energetic attempt is to be made to preserve a proper balance between the demand for and supply of labour. In a word, it is designed, as we suppose, to render the state of society in the colony as much a reflex as possible of what it is at home—a piece of Great Britain, with its organisation of employers and employed, planted at the opposite end of the earth. In order to carry these enlightened views into effect, it is proposed to devote all the money received for lands to the importation of labourers from this country; and therefore the greater the amount of capital laid out by emigrants in the purchase of lands, the greater will be the number of working men and their families sent out free by the Commissioners. The advantages to be derived from these and other arrangements were so obvious, that at the time of the erection of the colony, a joint-stock company was formed in London, for the purpose of purchasing and improving land, promoting emigration, and generally for co-operating with the Commissioners in advancing the interests of the colony. By this means the public have the choice of either buying land from the Commissioners, or dealing with the directors of the South Australian Company.

Lands are disposed of by the Commissioners at the rate of £1 sterling per acre; and, as far as we can learn, there do not exist in the colony any of those odious and unintelligible arrangements for the acquisition of lands, which embarrass the emigrant in New South Wales and Canada. The land is sold at once in lots at £1 per acre, and a very few days will complete the negotiation. The following account of the various modes by which settlers can acquire lands, and otherwise take advantage of the peculiarities of South Australian colonisation, is from an able pamphlet on the subject, entitled "The Great South Land," reprinted from the Stirling Observer newspaper:—

"With a view to purchase, the lands are divided into sections of 80 acres each, of which sections purchasers may have as many as they please, but no fractional part. The sales are conducted in the colony, under very salutary regulations for preventing partiality or undue means. But the emigrant may purchase in this country; and will, in that case, have the right to choose his location on arrival, and to take out with him, on free passage, two men and two women, as servants, for every section, if of the description recognised by the act. He will also himself, if eligible, be entitled to a free steerage passage; and may, on paying the difference, take a cabin, or intermediate passage.

The Commissioners grant leases of the pasturage of unsold lands at the yearly rent of 40s. per square mile, or 640 acres. The term is three years, the tenant having a right of renewal in preference to other applicants. Such leases, however, are limited exclusively to pasturage as sheep-runs. Cultivation of the soil, and the felling of timber, are disallowed; and the land, or any portion of it, is liable to sale, and if sold, the lease terminates on a notice of two months, the tenant having a right of renewal to unsold portions.

It is calculated that the capital necessary in such cases for purchases, ought not to be less than about £150 for every 80 acres, after paying price and passage-money, and for leases about two-thirds of that sum.

If the object of the emigrant is not immediate purchase, but to farm land as a tenant, he will find it most for his advantage to treat with the South Australian Company, who hold out greater inducements

in this respect than the Parliamentary Commissioners. This spirited association purchased from the Commissioners a large tract of freehold land, and an extensive right of pasturage in the colony, with the view not of immediate sale, but to encourage a farming tenantry, by letting out small portions on lease to industrious tenants, whom they assist with an advance of money to complete their erections and improvements, and secure in the eventual right to purchase their farms and all fixed improvements before the expiration of the lease, at a price specified at the time of entry.

The Company divide their freehold lands into lots of 67 acres (or half a section); 134 acres (or a whole section); and 268 acres (or a double section); each with a right of pasturage to 640 acres, or a square mile. The tenant selects the land in the colony, from the Company's unappropriated portions, which extend to about 14,000 acres freehold, and 200,000 pasturage. The leases are for twenty-one years, from the quarter-day after the selection of the lands. The applicant may select what number of sections he pleases, if he can show himself to be possessed of a fair capital, which the Company requires to be £150 for every half section. It is stipulated that this amount shall be expended solely and entirely on the farm; and, as a security, it must be deposited with the Company in England, an order being given on their manager in South Australia for the money, without deduction; and the tenant not only receives this sum in the colony at pleasure, but, in addition, to assist him to construct his buildings, and bring his land into a superior state of cultivation, the Company lend him a sum equal to his capital, at the current rate of interest in the colony.

The present rates of rental are, for freehold land—

4s. per acre per annum the first 7 years.

5s. - - - - - second 7 years.

6s. - - - - - third 7 years.

And for pasturage—

40s. per annum for each square mile, or 640 acres.

And the present terms for redeeming the freehold land, and right of pasturage leased with it, are—

£4 per acre, if before the first 7 years.

5 - - - - - from first to second 7 years.

6 - - - - - from second to third 7 years.

But from the great increase in the value of land in the colony, it is quite possible that these terms may be advanced. Each tenant must hire, for two years certain, two farming labourers; but these, if of the character and description required by the statute, get a free steerage passage. The farmer also, if married, and not much exceeding the statutory age, is allowed a free steerage passage; or a cabin, or intermediate berth, on paying the difference of passage-money."

ODD LONDON CHARACTERS OF FORMER TIMES.

SAMUEL FOOTE.

FOOTE—the unscrupulous Mathews of the last century, and one of the most singular men ever produced in England—was born in 1721, at Truro in Cornwall. He could boast of being at least a gentleman by birth, for his father was a land-proprietor and magistrate of ancient descent, while his mother was the daughter of Sir Edward Goodere, Bart., who at one time represented the county of Hereford in Parliament. His wit was developed in his very childhood; and his power of mimicry is said to have been suddenly brought into play, when a boy of twelve, in consequence of a discussion arising at his father's table respecting a rustic who had fallen under the observation of the parochial authorities. He on this occasion gave so lively an image of the demeanour and language which three of the justices were likely to assume when the culprit should be brought before them, that his father, one of the individuals taken off, rewarded him for the amusement he had given the company, and thus unintentionally encouraged a propensity which was afterwards to lead the youth into a mode of life which no father could have helped regretting. He was educated at Worcester College, Oxford, which had been founded by one of his near relations, and of which the superior, Dr Gower, was unfortunately an apt subject for his humour. Observing that the rope of the chapel bell was allowed to hang near to the ground in an open space where cows were sometimes turned for the night, he hung a wisp of straw to the end of it; the unavoidable consequence was, that some one of the animals was sure to seize the straw in the course of the night, and thus cause the bell to toll. A solemn consultation was held, and the provost undertook with the sexton to sit up in the chapel all night, for the purpose of catching the delinquent. They took their dreary station; at the midnight hour the bell tolled as before: out rushed the two watchmen, one of whom, seizing the cow in the dark, thought he had caught a gentleman commoner; while the doctor, grasping the animal by a different part of its body, exclaimed that he was convinced the postman was the rogue, for he felt his horn. Lights were speedily brought, and disclosed the nature of the jest, which served Oxford in laughter for a week.

Foote was an idle student, for which he was some-

times punished by having severe tasks imposed on him, as if one who would not study the ordinary proper time could be expected to give his mind to an uninteresting pursuit for an extraordinary time. When summoned before the provost, in order to be reprimanded for his junketings, the way would come with a vast folio dictionary under his arm; the doctor would begin, using, as was his custom, a great number of quaint learned words, on hearing which Foote would gravely beg pardon for interrupting him—look up the word in the dictionary—and then as gravely request him to go on. There could be no reasonable hope of such a youth as a student; yet he was sent to the Temple, with a view to his going to the bar. He is said to have here made no proficiency except in fashionable vices and dissipation. In 1741, he married a young lady of good family in Worcestershire, and immediately after went with his spouse to spend a month with his father in Cornwall.

Foote, having shortly after outrun his fortune, was induced by a bookseller, on a promise of ten pounds, to write a pamphlet in defence of his uncle Goodere, who was at this time in prison, previous to his trial for the inhuman murder of his brother, and for which he was afterwards executed. Perhaps some of the amiable prejudice called family pride aided in making him take up his pen in behalf of one who seems to have been as ruthless a monster as ever breathed. It must also be recollected that he was now only twenty. Whatever was the morality of the transaction—and indeed it is almost absurd to discuss such a point, considering the general nature of the man—it is related that when he went to receive the wages of his task, he was reduced so low as to be obliged to wear his boots to conceal that he wanted stockings. Having got the money, he bought a pair of stockings at a shop as he passed along. Immediately after, meeting a couple of boon companions, he was easily persuaded to go to dine with them at a tavern. While the wine was afterwards circulating, one of his friends exclaimed, "Why, hey, Foote, how is this? You seem to have no stockings on!" "No," replied the wit, with great presence of mind, "I never wear any at this time of the year, till I am going to dress for the evening; and you see (pulling out his recent purchase) I am always provided with a pair for the occasion." His mother succeeded by the death of her brother, Sir John D. Goodere, to five thousand per annum, but does not seem to have remained free from pecuniary embarrassments more than her son. The celebrated correspondence between her and Foote, given in the jest-books, is quite authentic, but rather too laconically expressed. An authentic copy is subjoined:—

"DEAR SAM—I am in prison for debt; come and assist your loving mother,
E. FOOTE."

"DEAR MOTHER—So am I; which prevents his duty being paid to his loving mother by her affectionate son,
SAM. FOOTE."

P. S.—I have sent my attorney to assist you; in the mean time, let us hope for better days."

It is not impossible that Mrs Foote's imprisonment took place before her accession of fortune was realised, and when she was a widow, for her husband died soon after Sam's marriage. This lady lived to eighty-four, and is said to have been much like her son, both in body and mind—witty, social, and fond of a pretty strong joke. From the character of her brothers, it seems not unlikely that, with the humour she gave her son, she also communicated a certain degree of insanity, the source of the many eccentricities which he displayed through life.

The necessities arising from pure prodigality drove Foote to the stage in 1744. He appeared at the Haymarket Theatre, as Othello, Macklin supporting him in Iago; but the performance was a failure.

But when I played Othello, thousands swore
They never saw such tragedy before—

says a rival wit in a retributory burlesque of the mimic. He tried comedy, and made a hit in the character of *Pondewife*. His salary proving unequal to his expenditure, he again became embarrassed, but relieved himself by an expedient, of which we will not attempt to estimate the morality. A lady of great fortune, anxious to be married, consulted the wit as to what she should do. He, recollecting his boon companion Sir Francis Delaval, who was as embarrassed as himself, recommended the lady to go to the conjuror in the Old Bailey, whom he represented as a man of uncommon skill and penetration. He employed another friend to personate the wise man, who depicted Sir Francis at full length, and described the time when, the place where, and the dress in which, she would see him. The lady was so struck with the coincidence of all the circumstances, as to marry the broken-down prodigal in a few days. An ample reward signalled the ingenuity of the adviser, and enabled him once more to face the world.

It was in spring 1747 that Foote commenced, in the Haymarket Theatre, his career as the sole entertainer of an audience, and thus was the originator of that kind of amusement which Dibdin, Mathews, and others, afterwards practised with success. The piece, written by himself, and styled the *Diversions of the Morning*, consisted chiefly of a series of imitations of well-known living persons. It met with immense applause, and soon raised the jealousy of the two great theatres of the metropolis, through whose intervention his career was stopped by the Westminster justices. In this dilemma he took it upon him to invite the public one evening to TEA: multitudes came; and

while all were wondering what he would do, he appeared before them, and mentioned that, "as he was training some young performers for the stage, he would, while tea was getting ready, proceed, if they had no objection, with his instructions." This, it may easily be conceived, was nothing else than a plan for taking off the players who were persecuting him, at the same time that he evaded the consequences of their rancour. His invitations to tea brought splendid audiences, and much money, but were interrupted by his receipt of a large legacy, which kept him for five years in the condition of an idle voluptuary. In 1753, he once more became connected with the stage, for which he produced a comedy in two acts, entitled *Taste*, which experienced great success, and was followed by a similar production entitled *The Author*. He had here caricatured, under the name of Cadwallader, a Welsh gentleman of his acquaintance, who was noted for pride of pedigree. Honest Mr Aprice, for that was his real name, was present at the play several times, without suspecting that, in Cadwallader, he saw another self; but at length, when he found every body calling him by that name, he began to perceive the joke, which enraged him so much that he applied to the Lord Chamberlain for an interdict against the play, which was granted. It is rather odd that the wit himself was characterised by the same foible, and not less blind to it than Mr Aprice. Some of his friends, knowing this, resolved to make it the subject of a jest at his expense. As they were laughing at persons piquing themselves on their descent, one of them slyly observed that, however people might ridicule family pretensions, he believed there never was a man well descended who was not proud of it. Foote, snapping the bait, replied, "No doubt, no doubt; for instance, now, though I trust I may be considered as far from a vain man, yet, being descended from as ancient a family as any in Cornwall, I am not a little proud of it, as, indeed, you shall see I may be;" and accordingly ordered a servant to bring the genealogical tree of the family, which he began to elucidate with all the absurdity that he so felicitously ridiculed in Cadwallader.

The spirit of these and other early compositions of Foote was to seize some point of fashionable folly, and expose it in a few scenes of broad humour, with the addition of the mimetic representation, by the author himself, of some noted real character. There was little of plot or contrivance in the pieces, but strong caricature painting, and ludicrous incidents, which rendered them extremely diverting. He took a somewhat higher aim when, in 1760, he burlesqued methodism in the *Minor*, a play which excited some angry controversy, but proved attractive to the public. His *Mayor of Garratt*, produced in 1763, was the nearest approach he made to legitimate comedy: its merits have kept it in vogue as one of the stock pieces of the British stage down almost to the present times.

In 1757, Foote paid a visit to Dublin, along with Tate Wilkinson, and the united mimicry of the two attracted large audiences. On this occasion Wilkinson mimicked even his companion, who, with the usual thin-skinnedness of the professed jester, did not relish the joke, and said it was the only attempt of his friend which did not succeed. At the end of this year, we find Foote engaged in a totally new speculation in the Irish capital. He set up as a fortune-teller, in a room hung with black cloth, and lighted by a single lantern, the light of which was scrupulously kept from his face: he succeeded so far, it is said, as to realise on some occasions L.30 a-day, at half-a-crown from each dupe. In 1759, when out at elbows in London, he paid his first visit to Scotland, borrowing a hundred pounds from Garrick to defray the expenses of his journey. He was well received in Edinburgh society, and by the public in general. Yet the Scots did not escape his sarcasm. One day, an old lady who was asked for a toast, gave *Charles the Third*—meaning, of course, the Pretender. "Of Spain, madam?" inquired Foote. "No, sir," cried the lady pettishly, "of England." "Never mind her," said one of the company; "she is one of our old folks who have not got rid of their political prejudices." "Oh, dear sir, make no apology," cried Foote; "I was prepared for all this, as, from your living so far north, I suppose none of you have yet heard of the Revolution." He afterwards paid several visits to Scotland, where, during 1771, he was manager of the Edinburgh theatre for a season, clearing a thousand pounds by the venture. He found that the Scotch, with all their gravity, have some little drollery amongst them. Robert Cullen, son of the eminent physician, and a noted mimic, and the Laird of Logan, not less distinguished as a wit, became his intimate friends. Another of the native humorists encountered him in a somewhat extraordinary way. This was Mr McCulloch of Ardwell, in the stewardry of Kirkcudbright, whose sayings are to this day quoted in his native province. In travelling from his country residence to Edinburgh with his own carriage, Mr McCulloch spent, as usual, a night in the inn at Moffat, and next day proceeded to ascend the terrible hill of Erickstane, which connects two great districts of Scotland, and forms decidedly the most difficult and dangerous piece of road in the whole country. A deep snow had fallen during the night, and Mr McCulloch, after proceeding three or four miles, was compelled to turn back. When he regained his inn, he found a smart carriage, with a gentleman in the inside, standing at the door, while the horses were getting changed: this he ascertained to be the equipage

of Mr Foote, the celebrated comedian. The Laird of Ardwell immediately went up to the panel and wrote upon it in chalk, the words—

Let not a single foot profane
The sacred snows of Erickstane.

Foote, surprised to see a punch little man writing on his carriage, came out to read the inscription, which amused him so much, that he immediately went and introduced himself to the writer. Further explanations then took place, which readily convinced him of the impossibility of proceeding farther that day; and the consequence was, that the two gentlemen resolved to make themselves as happy as possible where they were. The snow lay long; the terrors of Erickstane relented not for a fortnight; but the viands and liquors of the inn were good, and the conversation of the two storm-delayed gentlemen was like knife sharpening knife. In short, they spent the fortnight together in the utmost good fellowship, and were friends ever after.

One other trait of the Scottish wit which came under Foote's attention, may be noticed. At the close of an unsuccessful piece of law-business, when the agent of the opposite party called to get payment of the expenses, observing that that person was prepared for a journey, the comedian inquired where he was going. "To London," was the answer. "And how do you mean to travel?" asked the manager. "On foot," replied the wily agent, significantly depositing the cash in his pocket at the same moment.

As Foote was always ready to seize on any passing folly, either of the public or of individuals, as a means of attracting audiences, it is not surprising that the hoax of the Cock Lane Ghost, which took place in 1762, furnished him with a theme. Samuel Johnson being one of those who inclined to believe in the statements of the deceiving party, Foote resolved to bring that august character upon the stage. Johnson, dining one day at the house of Mr Thomas Davies, the bookseller, was informed of the design entertained by Foote, and knowing very well the kind of remonstrance to which alone the mimic was accessible, he asked his host if he knew the common price of an oak stick. Being answered, sixpence, he said, "Why, then, sir, give me leave to send your servant to purchase me a shilling one. I'll have a double quantity, for I am determined the fellow shall not take me off with impunity." Foote soon received information of this avowal of the Herculean lexicographer, and was further told that it was Johnson's intention "to plant himself in the front of the stage-box on the first night of the proposed play, and, if any buffoon attempted to mimic him, to spring forward on the stage, knock him down in the face of the audience, and then appeal to their common feelings and protection." It is almost unnecessary to add, that Johnson's character was omitted. Johnson was not an admirer of Foote. He, very absurdly we think, termed his mimicry not a power, but a vice; and alleged that he was not good at it, being unable, he said, to take off any one unless he had some strong peculiarity. He allowed, however, that he had wit, fertility of ideas, a considerable extent of information, and was "for obstreperous broad-faced mirth without an equal." "The first time," said Dr J., "that I was in company with Foote, was at Fitzherbert's. Having no good opinion of the fellow, I was resolved not to be pleased; and it is very difficult to please a man against his will. I went on eating my dinner pretty sullenly, affecting not to mind him. But the dog was so very comical, that I was obliged to lay down my knife and fork, throw myself back in my chair, and fairly laugh it out." He also told the following anecdote, still more strongly illustrative of the power of the wit:—"Amongst the many and various modes which he tried of getting money, he became a partner with a small-beer brewer, and he was to have a share of the profits for procuring customers among his numerous acquaintance. Fitzherbert was one who took his small beer, but it was so bad that the servants resolved not to drink it. They were at some loss how to notify their resolution, being afraid of offending their master, who they knew liked Foote much as a companion. At last they fixed upon a little black boy, who was rather a favourite, to be their deputy, and deliver their remonstrance; and having invested him with the whole authority of the kitchen, he was to inform Mr Fitzherbert, in all their names, upon a certain day, that they would drink Foote's small beer no longer. On that day Foote happened to dine at Fitzherbert's, and this boy served at the table; he was so delighted with Foote's stories that when he went down stairs, he told them, 'This is the finest man I have ever seen. I will not deliver your message. I will drink his small beer.'"

When in Dublin in 1763, Foote produced his play of the *Orators*, in which he burlesqued Sheridan the elocutionist, and George Faulkner, an eminent printer in the Irish capital. This last gentleman, who, from egotism and every kind of coxombry, is said to have been a rich subject for Foote's genius, prosecuted him for libel, and gained large damages. Here also some hot Hibernian spirit so far resented being made a subject of ridicule by the wit, as to kick him openly on the street. Dr Johnson's remark on this last circumstance was bitterness steeped in bitterness—"Why, Foote must be rising in the world; when he was in England, no one thought it worth while to kick him." By his various talents, Foote was now in the enjoy-

* Bowtell.

ment of a large income; but his invincible extravagance kept him always poor. He had a maxim, that to live in a state of constant effort to restrain expenses, is the nearest thing to absolute poverty. He had a town and country house, and a carriage, and entertained great numbers of all kinds of people in the most superb style. On one occasion, after the successful run of one of his plays, he expended twelve hundred pounds on a service of plate—remarking, when the act was spoken of by a friend with surprise, that, as he could not keep his gold, he was resolved to try if he could keep silver. On another occasion, when at Bristol, on his way to Dublin, falling into play, in which he was at all times a great dupe, he lost seventeen hundred pounds, being all that he had to commence operations with in Ireland, and was obliged to borrow a hundred to carry him on his way. In 1766, when riding home from a gentleman's house where he had been entertained in Hants, he was thrown, and had one of his legs broken in two places. He bore the amputation of the limb, not only with fortitude, but with jocularly. While the accident did not materially mar his efficiency as an actor, it procured him a positive advance in fortune. The Duke of York, brother to George III., having been present when it happened, was so much interested in consequence in behalf of the unfortunate mimic, that he obtained for him a royal patent, which enabled him to keep the Haymarket Theatre open for the four summer months as long as he lived.

With Garrick our hero was occasionally on such good terms as to borrow money from him. At other times, professional rivalry made them bitter enemies. In the year 1769, Mr Garrick made a great hit by bringing out the celebrated Stratford Jubilee on the stage, himself appearing as one of the most important persons in the procession. Foote, pining with envy, resolved to burlesque an affair certainly very open to ridicule, and in a mock procession to introduce Garrick with all his masquerading paraphernalia, while some droll was to address him in the following lines of the jubilee laureate—

A nation's taste depends on you,
Perhaps a nation's virtues too—

whereupon the puffed-up manager was to clap his arms like the wings of a cock, and cry out

Cock-a-doodle-doo!

Garrick heard of the scheme, and for some time was like to go distracted with vexation, anticipating the utter ruin of his fame. Foote, meanwhile, borrowed from him five hundred pounds, which Garrick was probably glad to give, in the hope that his kindness would soften the satirist. Soon after, Foote pettishly gave back the money, on hearing it reported that he was under obligations to Garrick. The situation of the latter gentleman was now so miserable, that some friends interfered to obtain assurance from Foote that he would spare Garrick. If it be strange to contemplate a man of such secure reputation as Garrick writhing under the fear of ridicule, it is infinitely more curious to learn that Foote, who was so impartial, as Johnson called it, as to burlesque and tell lies of every body, never took up a newspaper without dreading to meet with some squib upon himself.* After the two managers had been reconciled, Garrick paid Foote a visit, and expressed some gratification at finding a bust of himself above the bureau of his brother actor. "But," said Garrick, "how can you trust me so near your gold and bank notes?" "Oh, because you have got no hands," replied the irrepressible Foote.

In 1775, Foote being understood to have written a play called the *Trip to Calais*, in which he had ridiculed the Duchess of Kingston as Lady Kitty Crocodile, that eccentric lady commenced a fierce altercation with him, which it would now be vain to describe at length. Its consequence was the withdrawal of the character from the play. When the piece was subsequently presented, a Dr Jackson, who conducted a newspaper, and was secretary to the duchess, took deadly offence at being ridiculed in it, and commenced a course of vindictive proceedings against the author. A servant of Foote was tempted to make a charge against him of so degrading a nature, that the poor mimic, although honourably cleared, sank under the pain of mind which it had occasioned him. He scarcely afterwards could muster strength to appear on the stage, and it soon became necessary that he should seek health in a milder climate. Having sold his interest in the theatre to Mr Colman for an annuity of fifteen hundred a-year, he prepared to leave London. About an hour before stepping into his chaise to proceed to Dover, he walked through his house, and took a careful survey of his pictures, which were numerous and excellent. On coming before the portrait of a deceased intimate and fellow-actor, he gazed on it for ten minutes, and then turned away, saying, "Poor Weston!" Immediately he added, in a tone of self-reproach, "Poor Weston! It will very soon, I fear, be Poor Foote!" He was right. After an ineffectual visit to Paris, he returned to London, and expired on the 21st of October 1777. His remains were interred in Westminster Abbey.

It would be absurd to weigh such a man as Foote in ordinary balances. Such persons are mere sports of nature, which she sends apparently for no other purpose than to promote the salutary act of laughter among the species. Yet, while Foote wanted all moral

dignity, he is allowed to have been upon the whole a humane and generous man. That impartiality, also, in the distribution of his ridicule, of which Johnson spoke, might be considered as in some degree a redeeming clause in his character. And it really seems to have often served to obviate the offence which would have otherwise been taken against him. Cumberland tells in his *Memoirs*, that, having four persons one day at dinner, and one having gone behind a screen, Foote, conceiving he had left the house, began to play off his jokes against him; whereupon the subject of his ridicule cried out, "I am not gone, Foote; spare me till I am out of hearing; and now, with your leave, I will stay till these gentlemen depart, and then you shall amuse me at their cost, as you have amused them at mine." With such a man it was vain to fall into a passion. He was a being to be laughed at or with—serious censure would have been thrown away upon him, and playful sarcasm would have only vexed him, without teaching him from his own to pity another's pains. If it be thought proper to condemn poor Foote upon the score of principle, we frankly own that ours is not the pen which can frame the verdict.

TRACES OF THE ORIGIN OF A FEW USEFUL ARTS.*

The term "good old English fare" is frequently used without much knowledge of what that fare consisted. "The roast-beef of Old England, so well known to song, existed only in poetical visions. The Percy family have in their possession a book, containing the household system of an earl of Northumberland, in the reign of Henry VII., in which every thing is set down with a precision which would amaze a veteran housekeeper of our day. This has always been one of the wealthiest and most liberal establishments in England. The regular household consisted of one hundred and sixty-six persons, including the earl's family, knights and gentlemen, and domestics, with their families; in addition to these, preparation was made for fifty guests every day. From this book it appears, that from Midsummer to Michaelmas—September 25th—they had fresh meat, so called, but lived on salted provisions all the rest of the year. And this fare was so much the worse, because they had no vegetables worth naming. Potatoes were not introduced till a century after; and in the succeeding reign, when the queen wanted a salad, she was obliged to send a man for it to Flanders. The book directs that 'My lord has on his table for breakfast, at seven in the morning, a quart of beer and wine, two pieces of salt fish, six red herrings, four white ones; and on flesh days, half a chine of beef or mutton boiled.' The defects of this meal could not have been supplied by bread, because England was not at that time an agricultural country."

In these olden times, "the whole family, bond and free, sat at one table, the distinctions of rank being marked by the elevation of different parts of the table, or by the *salt*, which was generally large and of curious workmanship, placed upon the board to mark the boundary line. At the Percy table, the earl's family were elevated above the knights and gentlemen, and they, in turn, above the common herd of retainers. The earl's table was provided with linen, that of the knights also had a table-cloth, which a distinguished historian conjectures was washed once a month, though of this there is no certainty. It may enlighten us as to the scrupulous neatness of that day, to know, that the cost of washing in this family of two hundred persons, was never to exceed forty shillings a-year, most of which was expended on the linen of the chapel." Soap is a comparatively modern invention, and in some parts of continental Europe it is yet hardly known, or any substitute for it. Knowing English travellers in France always carry a piece of soap with them.

The art of preparing deals of timber has been greatly simplified in modern times. "The old practice in making boards was to split up the logs with wedges; and inconvenient as the practice was, it was no easy matter to persuade the world that the thing could be done in any better way. Saw-mills were first used in Europe in the fifteenth century; but so lately as 1555, an English ambassador, having seen a saw-mill in France, thought it a novelty which deserved a particular description. It is amusing to see how the aversion to labour-saving machinery has always agitated England. The first saw-mill was established by a Dutchman, in 1663; but the public outcry against the newfangled machine was so violent, that the proprietor was forced to decamp with more expedition than ever did Dutchman before. The evil was thus kept out of England for several years, or rather generations; but in 1768, an unlucky timber merchant, hoping that after so long a time the public would be less watchful of its own interests, made a rash attempt to construct another mill. The guardians of the public welfare, however, were on the alert, and a conscientious mob at once collected and pulled the mill to pieces. Such patriotic spirit could not always last; and now, though we have nowhere seen the fact distinctly stated, there is reason to believe that saw-mills are used in England."

Chimnies are altogether of modern invention. "Not a vestige of a chimney is found in Herculaneum, nor is there any reason to believe that they were known

in ancient times. The name was given to the hole in the roof through which the smoke escaped after the manner alluded to by Horace, when he compared care to smoke passing round the ceiling. The ancients made use of the smoke to season the wood which they used for particular purposes; such as making ploughs, waggons, and rudders. Still it was a serious inconvenience to them, and they tried various means to rid themselves of an evil, which caused them to shed many tears. They peeled the bark from wood; immersed it in water, and let it dry; hardened it over the fire; soaked it in the lees of oil; but all to no purpose. Athenæus says, that one of the qualifications of a good cook is to know in which direction the smoke will move, for it often spoils many dishes. Columella gave directions for making the kitchen roof so high as not to be set on fire." It is remarkable that the Romans had not hit upon the idea of chimnies, for they appear to have been acquainted with a plan of heating houses by flues of heated air. This is ascertained by a discovery made at Herculaneum. "Under the lower apartments of a ruined villa, were found chambers about as high as a common table, excavated like our cellars. These chambers were made very close, to prevent the escape of the heat; they were roofed with broad tiles, and supported by pillars, which, as well as the tiles, were strongly cemented, that the heat might not separate them. Here the fire was made, and in the roofs of these chambers were square pipes of clay hanging half way down, the mouths opening into the apartments above. Similar pipes were carried into the second story of the house. The mouths of these pipes were ornamented with a lion's head of burnt clay, and so formed that they could be regulated at pleasure. The vapour or steam-bath was situated directly over one of these chambers."

We come now to the invention of beds. "In the early ages, skins were generally used both for bed and pillow. In travelling, the wayfarer was content to take a stone for a pillow, and having spread his upper garment on it, to sleep without any further preparation. Carpets were sufficient for this purpose with most of the people in later times, and had the advantage of being easily transported from one place to another. In order to take up his bed and walk, a man had nothing to do but to roll it up and place it under his arms. This seems to have been the only purpose for which carpets were used in ancient times. There are not many regions of the earth, even now, in which they are generally employed as a covering for floors. The old practice in England was to strew the floor with rushes, so that visitors who could not find any other seat, might, without much inconvenience, deposit themselves upon the floor. But even as regards the interests of neatness, it would have been quite as well to have left it bare, for Erasmus, in describing respectable English houses, gives us to understand that under the rushes with which the floor was spread, lay a collection of fragments, bones, beer, and a thousand other abominations. He says, that no doubt the frequent plagues in England were owing to this unsavoury practice; and there has been no example of that disorder since the great fire in London, in the time of Charles II., purified the city. This exemption was, probably, ascribed to the operation of quarantine laws, since every nation makes it a point of honour to deny that plague or yellow fever ever originated at home."

But to return to the bed. In the times of the Hebrew kingdom, the bed resembled a divan, consisting of a low elevation running round three sides of a small room. This was covered with stuffed cushions of the same width, and bolsters were put on the back against the wall. They also had beds resembling our sofas; but these were luxuries—a carpet was enough for the greater proportion of the people. The Romans, luxurious as they were, do not appear to have made use of feather-beds much before the time of Pliny. In the early republican times they slept on leaves; afterwards they used hay and straw. Till the close of the thirteenth century, straw was common in the chambers of palaces. The kings of England used to sleep, father and son, in the same chamber." The present kind of bed is the result of divers improvements. First, a coverlet was thrown over the person in his straw couch; then followed the practice of entirely undressing, and an additional supply of bed-clothes was used; next, linen sheets came into use, in the place of blankets; and, lastly, hangings or curtains were hung over the bed, to secure both privacy and comfort. To the English belongs the merit of having carried improvements in beds, as in many other domestic arrangements, to the highest perfection. It is chiefly by the frequent shifting of the dress, and the sleeping in clean bedding, that the want of bathing of the person is compensated. In countries less improved in these respects, frequent bathing is essential to the preservation of health."

The practices of the ancients with regard to dress, were very different from ours. "With them a dress descended from father to son, and from generation to generation, without being subject to the 'proud man's contumely,' by reason of its being out of fashion. Those were days in which the tailor did not make the man; no cravat bound the throat, to remind the exquisite of the destiny to which all may come; no bonds, save those of justice, ever imprisoned the free limb; no tight shoe gave anguish to the much-enduring toe. The garments might then be made at once for the lifetime; and if neither moth nor thief reached them, they were a safe property, which did not lose its value."

* Davies's *Memoirs of Garrick*.

* This article is abridged, a few of our own observations excepted, from the North American Review for the year 1831.

The most ancient garment was the tunic, which was a sort of gown fitted to the form, having short sleeves and a girdle. This was worn by both sexes. There were two kinds of girdle—one made of leather and secured by clasps, the other of cloth; both were employed as purses, having an opening through which money could be inserted. The upper garment was a plain piece of cloth, generally ten or twelve feet long, and half as wide; which we suppose would now be called a mantle. It was often woven in a single piece without a seam, and was thrown like a shawl over the shoulders; sometimes drawn over the left shoulder and fastened at two corners by a buckle on the right. It was on this garment that the Hebrews were directed by Moses to wear the blue ribbon which distinguished them from other nations. The poor used it as the Highlanders did their plaid, for bedclothes by night; and for this reason, if the Hebrew creditor had seized this article of dress, he was compelled by law to restore it before nightfall. The chief difference between the male and female dress was, that the latter always wore the veil. Labouring men went to their work without the upper garment, which explains the prophecy, that at the siege of Jerusalem they will have no time to return for their clothes. When they went to any distance on foot, they gathered the tunic in folds, and secured it with their girdle at the waist, that it might not embarrass their feet; this was called girding the loins.

The dress of the Greeks and Romans was not very different from this. It was flowing and graceful; but while we allow that in point of freedom and appearance their drapery was better than ours, we maintain that in some other respects the advantage is decidedly our own. What is now called linen, for example, an article so important that no man willingly dispenses with it, was wholly unknown to the ancients; and had they known it, its advantages would have been in a measure neutralised, by their practice of putting oil on their limbs and head. There are some respects in which the personal habits of the ancients will not bear investigation. The pocket-handkerchief, which is found in all but the most benighted portions of the modern world, was not among their comforts and blessings; and what supplied its place, is more easily imagined than described. As one other slight indication, Pompey the Great appears to have been ridiculed by a satirist, because, with a remarkable effeminacy, he made use of but one finger in scratching his head.

It was long before mankind thought of making garments for the legs. Stockings are modern, and nothing like pantaloons or trousers was worn by the Hebrews, Greeks, or early Romans. The idea of this part of dress seems to have originated in Gaul, or ancient France, whence, latterly, all our modern fashions have been derived. The hat, coat, waistcoat, trousers of men, and also the principal items of female attire, are of French descent.

EXTRAORDINARY INSTANCE OF GAMBLING.

It is well known upon the western waters, that the firemen and other hands employed upon the boats spend much of their idle time in playing cards. Of the passion for gaming, thus excited, an instance has been narrated to us, upon most credible authority, which surpasses the highest wrought fictions of the gambler's fate. A coloured freeman, in a steam-boat running between the city and New Orleans, had lost all his money at *poker* with his companions. He then staked his clothing, and being still unfortunate, pledged his own freedom for a small amount: losing this, the bets were doubled; and he finally, at one desperate hazard, ventured his full value as a slave, and laid down his free papers to represent the stake. He lost, suffered his certificates to be destroyed, and was actually sold by the winner to a slave-dealer, who hesitated not to take him at a small discount upon his assessed value. When last heard of by one who knows him, and who informed us of the fact, he was still paying in servitude the penalty of his criminal folly.—*Cincinnati Express.*

FLIES AND BLUE-BOTTLES.

We find in the New Orleans Bulletin the following caution connected with a notice of a new wire safe for food:—"Flies—At this season of the year we cannot be too careful in guarding against the noxious deposit of these insects on our food; more especially we should particularly be on our guard against the attacks of those commonly called 'blue-bottles,' which engender living animalcule in the short space of twenty or thirty minutes." We have had occasion of late to notice the rapid and injurious effects of these "blue-bottles." We beg to mention that the injurious effects of things called "black-bottles" are as conspicuous as those from "blue-bottles." A family of our acquaintance lost their dinner last Sunday by that means. The father took of his hard earnings to go to market, purchased a sufficiency of meat for his family, stopped, and had his bottle and his stomach filled with whisky; he tumbled into the gutter, the bottle broke, and the meat was ruined in less than twenty minutes; thus the poor wife and children suffered from the attack of both the black and the blue bottle. A friend of ours has gone to the sea-shore to get cured from an attack of the black-bottle. And last week, while driving along Eleventh-street, a youngster in the carriage called our attention to a decently dressed female who was walking crookedly on the pavement, to the grief of her little daughter, whom she held by the hand. "What is the matter with the poor woman?" said the child. We looked, and saw at once that she had been attacked by the "black-bottle." And we see since, that there is a good deal of that mischief going on. We hope it will subside with the warm weather.—*American paper.*

AFAR IN THE DESERT.

The following is from "Ephemerides," by Thomas Pringle, 1826. Mr Pringle, a native of Scotland, spent several years in the Cape of Good Hope settlement, where he wrote the following and other poems relative to the scenery and habits of life peculiar to that colony. He afterwards returned to London, and was for a considerable time an efficient servant to the Anti-Slavery Society. This amiable and able man died about two years ago.

Afar in the Desert I love to ride,
With the silent Bush-boy alone by my side:
When the sorrows of life the soul o'ercast,
And, sick of the present, I turn to the past;
And the eye is suffused with regretful tears;
From the fond recollections of former years;
And the shadows of things that have long since fled
Flit over the brain, like the ghosts of the dead—
Bright visions of glory, that vanish'd too soon—
Day-dreams that departed ere manhood's noon—
Attachments by fate or by falsehood left—
Companions of early days lost or left—
And my NATIVE LAND! whose magical name
Thrills to my heart like electric flame;
The home of my childhood; the haunts of my prime;
All the passions and scenes of that rapturous time,
When the feelings were young, and the world was new,
Like the fresh bowers of Paradise opening to view!—
All—all now forsaken, forgotten, or gone—
And I, a lone exile—remember'd of none—
My high aims abandon'd—and good acts undone—
Aweary of all that is under the sun—
With that sadness of heart which no stranger may scan,
I fly to the Desert afar from man.

Afar in the Desert I love to ride,
With the silent Bush-boy alone by my side;
When the wild turmoil of this wearisome life,
With its scenes of oppression, corruption, and strife;
The proud man's frown, and the base man's fear:
And the scornful laugh, and the sufferer's tear;
And malice, and meanness, and falsehood, and folly,
Dispose me to musing and dark melancholy;
When my bosom is full, and my thoughts are high,
And my soul is sick with the bondman's sigh—
Oh, then—there is freedom, and joy, and pride,
Afar in the Desert alone to ride!
There is rapture to vault on the champing steed,
And to bound away with the eagle's speed,
With the death-fraught firelock in my hand,
(The only law of the Desert land).
But 'tis not the innocent to destroy,
For I hate the huntsman's savage joy.

Afar in the Desert I love to ride,
With the silent Bush-boy alone by my side:
Away—away from the dwellings of men,
By the wild deer's haunt, and the buffalo's glen;
By valleys remote, where the oribi plays;
Where the gnuo, the gazelle, and the hartebeest graze;
And the gemsbok and eland unhunted recline
By the skirts of grey forests o'ergrown with wild vine;
And the elephant browses at peace in his wood;
And the river-horse gambols unscared in the flood;
And the mighty rhinoceros wallows at will
In the *Vley*, where the wild ass is drinking his fill.

Afar in the Desert I love to ride,
With the silent Bush-boy alone by my side:
O'er the brown Karroo where the bleating cry
Of the springbok's fawn sounds plaintively;
Where the zebra wantonly tosses his mane,
In fields seldom freshen'd by moisture or rain:
And the stately koodoo exultingly bounds,
Undisturb'd by the bay of the hunter's hounds;
And the timorous quagha's wild whistling neigh
Is heard by the brak fountain far away;
And the fleet-footed ostrich over the waste
Speeds like a horseman who travels in haste;
And the vulture in circles wheels high overhead,
Greedy to scent and to gorge on the dead;
And the grisly wolf, and the shrieking jackal,
Howl for their prey at the evening fall;
And the fiend-like laugh of hyenas grim
Fearfully startles the twilight dim.

Afar in the Desert I love to ride,
With the silent Bush-boy alone by my side:
Away—away in the wilderness vast,
Where the white man's foot hath never pass'd,
And the quiver'd Koranna or Bechuan
Hath rarely cross'd with his roving clan:
A region of emptiness, howling and drear,
Which man hath abandon'd from famine and fear;
Which the snake and the lizard inhabit alone,
And the bat flitting forth from his old hollow stone;
Where grass, nor herb, nor shrub takes root,
Save poisonous thorns that pierce the foot:
And the bitter melon, for food and drink,
Is the pilgrim's fare, by the Salt Lake's brink:
A region of drought, where no river glides,
Nor rippling brook with osier'd sides;
Nor reedy pool, nor mossy fountain,
Nor shady tree, nor cloud-capp'd mountain,
Are found—to refresh the aching eye:
But the barren earth, and the burning sky,
And the black horizon round and round,
Without a living sight or sound,
Tell to the heart, in its pensive mood,
That this is—NATURE'S SOLITUDE!

And here—while the night-winds round me sigh,
And the stars burn bright in the midnight sky,
As I sit apart by the cavern'd stone,
Like Elijah at Horeb's cave alone,
And feel as a moth in the Mighty Hand
That spread the heavens and heaved the land—
A "still small voice" comes through the wild,
(Like a father consoling his fretful child),
Which banishes bitterness, wrath, and fear—
Saying "MAN IS DISTANT, BUT GOD IS NEAR!"

CURIOUS FACTS RESPECTING THE DECOMPOSITION OF THE HORSE.

THE following circumstance (says the *Calcutta Literary Gazette*), taken from a French work, would indicate that the putrefactive product is not the same over all animated nature, and that the decomposition of a horse is not merely free from noxious qualities, but absolutely a preservative of health, and promotive of the longevity of the human race. There is no animal poison so deadly to man, as that arising from his own species; and we learn from the accompanying extract, that curriers never experience injury from horse skins, while they suffer from those of cows, and more particularly from the skins of sheep. If different animals yield dissimilar gases, in passing from life into the molleculæ of putridity, we may reasonably infer from analogy, that various plants, during the same process, emit noxious and innocuous productions; hence, we may reconcile the adverse opinions regarding marsh miasm or malaria, and be enabled to comprehend, why some places are not peculiarly unhealthy, although low and swampy, and other situations are the reverse.

A committee have been engaged in France in examining the circumstances relative to the knacker's operations. His business consists in killing old worn-out horses, and turning every part of their body to account. The most singular results which the committee have obtained, relate to the innocuous nature of the exhalations arising from the putrefying matter; every body examined agreed that they were offensive and disgusting, but no one that they were unwholesome; on the contrary, they appeared to conduce to health. All the men, women, and children concerned in the works of this kind, had unvarying health, and were remarkably well in appearance, and strong in body. The workmen commonly attained an old age, and were generally free from the usual infirmities which accompany it. Sixty, seventy, and even eighty, were common ages. Persons who live close to the places, or go there daily, share these advantages with the workmen. During the time that an epidemic fever was in full force at two neighbouring places, not one of the workmen in the establishment at Montfaucon was affected by it. It did not appear that it was only the men who were habituated to the works that were thus favoured: for when, from press of business, new workmen were taken on, they did not suffer in health from the exhalations.

In confirmation of the above observations, similar cases are quoted: above two hundred exhumations are made yearly at Paris, about three or four months after death; not a single case of injury to the workmen has been observed. M. Labarraque has observed that the catgut makers, who live in a continually putrid atmosphere, arising from macerating intestines, enjoy remarkable health. Similar circumstances were remarked at the exhumations of the *Cimetière des Innocents*.

Whatever disease the horse may have died of, or been killed for, the workmen have no fear, adopt no precautions, and run no risk. Sometimes, when strangers are present, they pretend to be careful, but upon close inquiry, laugh at such notions. They handle diseased as well as healthy parts *always* with impunity. They frequently cut themselves, but the wounds heal with the greatest facility, and their best remedy is to put a slice of the flesh about the wound.

On making inquiry of those to whom the horse skins were sent, and who, besides, having to handle them when very putrescent, were more exposed to effects from diseases in the skin, they learned that these men, also, from experience, had no fear, and never suffered injury. Horse skins never occasioned injury to those who worked them, but in this they differed from the skins of oxen, cows, and especially sheep, which sometimes did occasion injury, though not so often as is usually supposed.

[Perhaps the doctrines here advanced ought to be received with some degree of caution, as we have heard of the case of a man whose life was destroyed in consequence of his having assisted, with a punctured hand, in the cutting up of a horse which had died of the glanders.]

RESULTS OF TRAVELLING.

Facility in travelling, and frequent intercourse with the rest of mankind, tends to destroy prejudices; steam-boats and railways are every day removing some barrier to improvement, to international intercourse, and to the amalgamation of the different states of Europe and America; and it is not too much to say, that the steam-engine, more than any other discovery yet made, is destined to be one of the great means of civilising the world—creating mutual sympathies and mutual wants—the greatest of all securities against the effects of ignorance, and the calamities of war.—*Sun.*

A FAMILY LIKENESS.

Some soldiers who were quartered in a country village, when they met at the roll-call, were asking one another what kind of quarters they had got; one of them said he had got very good quarters, but the strangest landlady ever he had—she always took him off. His comrade said he would go along with him, and would take her off. He goes, and offers to shake hands with her, saying, "How are you, Elspa?" (that was her name). "Indeed, sir," says she, "ye hae the better o' me; I dimna ken you." "Dear Elspa, do ye no ken me? I am the devil's sister's son." "Dear save us," quoth she, looking him broadly in the face, "O, man, but ye're like your uncle."—*Old Scrap-book.*

CHILD'S CAUL.

To be sold for thirty guineas, a child's caul, that has already made seventy-two voyages, in which were encountered thirty-eight hurricanes, besides sundry small storms, without a single drowning taking place. Application to be made at Mr Underwood's, Fleet Street, where two old women attend daily.—N.B. This caul is particularly useful in steam-boats and balloons.—*Medical Adviser.*

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